

PATENT APPLICATION

Attorney Docket No. C03092US (08395.7C7)

TITLE OF THE INVENTION

"GAS FIRED OUTDOOR COOKING APPARATUS THAT INCLUDES POT  
5 WITH SPIGOT DRAIN"

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CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATIONS

This is a continuation of U.S. Serial No. 10/229,313,  
10 filed August 27, 2002 (now U.S. Patent 6,698,335), which is  
a continuation-in-part of U.S. Serial No. 09/838,091, filed  
April 19, 2001 (now U.S. Patent 6,439,107), which is a  
continuation-in-part of U.S. Serial No. 09/703,993, filed  
November 1, 2000 (now abandoned) which is a continuation in  
15 part of U.S. Serial No. 09/567,676, filed May 9, 2000 (now  
abandoned) which is a continuation in part of U.S. patent  
application Serial No. 09/426,210, filed October 25, 1999  
(now U.S. Patent 6,058,830), which is a continuation in part  
of U.S. patent application Serial No. 09/149,842, filed  
20 September 8, 1998 (now U.S. Patent 5,970,852), which is a  
continuation of U.S. Serial Number 08/813,463 filed March  
10, 1997 (now U.S. Patent 5,813,321), each of the above  
being incorporated herein by reference.

STATEMENT REGARDING FEDERALLY SPONSORED RESEARCH OR  
25 DEVELOPMENT

Not applicable

REFERENCE TO A "MICROFICHE APPENDIX"

Not applicable

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

30 1. Field of the Invention

The present invention relates to outdoor cooking  
devices and cooking accessories and more particularly to a  
natural gas fired outdoor cooker that is supplied with a  
source of fuel such as butane or propane from a canister and  
35 that includes a stand, pot, and pot liner, the improvement

including a special configuration of the burner and a connected table that enables a user to quickly support a pot liner or basket upon the table after it is removed from the pot of boiling liquid.

5           2.     General Background of the Invention

A number of outdoor cookers have been sold commercially for a number of years and are admitted as "prior art" type burners. These "prior art" burners have traditionally included a metallic frame that supports a  
10 burner nozzle, such as a cast iron burner nozzle. Such burner nozzles are commercially available and are used to fire most natural gas fired hot water heaters.

Examples of these prior art type outdoor cooking devices can be seen in the January 1, 1996 brochure of Metal  
15 Fusion, Inc., of Jefferson, Louisiana. Patents have issued naming Norman Bourgeois as inventor that relate to burners and related cooking apparatus. Examples include U.S. Patent 5,065,735 for a "Convertible Burner Apparatus" that features different primary burner frames and legs that can elevate  
20 the burner frames. Other Bourgeois patents that relate to cooking devices include the aforementioned patent numbers 5,813,321; 5,970,852; and 6,058,830.

The burner nozzle can be a cast iron hot water heater type burner nozzle or a jet burner arrangement that uses a  
25 single outlet centered in a cylindrically-shaped, vertically oriented metallic tube. The most common version of the prior art "jet burner" arrangement is seen in Metal Fusion's catalog as Model No. 90PK. Another version of this type of cooker includes two spaced apart circular rings connected  
30 with struts and having a cylindrically-shaped wind guard or shroud. This type of prior art burner can be seen for example as Metal Fusion Model Nos. 82PK, 83PK, 85PK, 86PK, and 86PKJ.

For cooking some food items such as poultry items, it  
35 is sometimes desirable to fry the object in a basket that

can be lifted from the pot. An example of this type of "prior art" arrangement is seen in the 1996 Metal Fusion catalog as Model No. 32TPK. For a combination cooking arrangement that includes a burner, pot and liner, the user typically places the poultry item in the basket and lowers it into boiling oil using a bail. In the prior art, bails have often been detachable from the basket so that the user can lower the basket into the pot and the contained boiling oil and then remove the handle or bail therefrom. This allows the user to eliminate the transfer of heat from the basket to the handle during the elongated cooking process.

A number of patents have issued that relate to cooking devices and utensils for use in combination with cooking vessels. The Walker Patent 4,735,135 provides a utensil assembly and kit including same for cooking vessels used in preparing and supporting combustibles above the bottom of the cooking vessel and away from its inner walls. The utensil kit comprises a base supported above the bottom of the cooking vessel, a plurality of support attachments separately detachable and interchangeably mountable on the base for supporting selected combustible products, and releasable latch mechanism having two parts, one part disposed on the base, and the other part is disposed on each of the support attachments for engaging the base. One of the utensils is a poultry support attachment that fits inside the cavity of a chicken or other poultry enabling it to be positioned upright.

The Rappaport patent 3,053,169, discloses a poultry supporting device that sits upon a base in the form of a pan.

A rotisserie cooking arrangement is disclosed in the French Patent 2685862.

A roasting support for fowl is disclosed in U.S. Patent No. 5,106,642. The apparatus includes a longitudinally extending rod that extends through the center

of the turkey having an eyelet at its upper end.

A roaster for poultry and meat is disclosed in U.S. Patent 5,301,602. The apparatus includes a vertical roasting apparatus wherein a predetermined amount of liquid  
5 for generating the moisture required to produce a high quality and flavorful roasting of the meat is included in a reservoir formed within the support structure itself and disposed internally of the poultry or meat being roasted.

A vertical spit for displaying roasting or warming is  
10 disclosed in U.S. Patent 5,442,999.

A combination outdoor cooker and smoker is disclosed in U.S. Patent 5,531,154. The apparatus includes a cooker having a gas burner coupled to an external gas source through a control valve by a gas supply conduit.

15 An Austrian patent 217592 discloses a cooking device that has a central member upon which a turkey or chicken is supported during the cooking operation.

British patent 2205734A discloses a device for use in preparing and cooking kebabs that includes walls which are  
20 interconnected to define a tube member and into which a first end wall is slidably received to further reinforce the shape formed by the sidewalls and whose end position is determined by the engagement of lips projecting inwardly from the sidewalls. The sidewalls are apertured  
25 longitudinally for receiving a knife to cut food within the tube member.

Issued patents to Barbour (U.S. patents 5,758,569 and 5,896,810) disclose a cooking apparatus directed to the frying of poultry items such as turkeys.

30 Several patents have issued that are directed to a cooker or pot having a spigot provided on the pot wall that enables liquid to be withdrawn from the pot via the spigot. An example of such an early patent is the Saroni patent 57,577 entitled "Apparatus for Steaming Vegetables." In the  
35 Saroni 577 patent, a spigot B is provided for withdrawing

liquid from the receptacle or pot.

The Paterson patent 74,123 discloses in Figure 1 a spigot mounted on the wall of a pot.

The Durham patent 123,876 discloses a boiler (see  
5 Figures 1 and 3) in the form of a pot having handles and a lid H. The Durham '876 patent states that one or more of the lower components are using for cooking solids, and the others are either for soup or other liquid, the latter C or either of them being provided with a tap D at the bottom for  
10 drawing off the contents.

The Goodwyn patent provides a cooking vessel. A faucet B is provided at the lower end of the boiler A.

The Harper patent 1,054,114 discloses a furnace that includes a vat that can be fastened to the top of the fire  
15 box by means of a sleeve D formed integral therewith and adapted to fit over the smoke pipe E. This vat is provided with a cover D' and also an outlet pipe E having a spigot E'.

A cooking vessel is disclosed in the Clayton patent  
20 1,272,222 that includes a cooking vessel 10 having an outlet nipple 11 in which is rotatably mounted on a valve plug 12. This valve structure enables the liquid to be easily drawn off.

The Jobe patent 1,390,908 discloses a cooking vessel  
25 that has an outer pipe 20 that has one end communicating with the inner receptacle for drawing liquids therefrom, the pipe extending through the outer receptacle and equipped with a valve 21.

The Austin patent 1,827,131 provides a pot drain in  
30 the form of pipe 12 that is fitted with a cap 13.

The Baker patent 2,350,335 discloses a brewer or cooker that has a drain valve 7 adjacent its lower end through which brewed coffee may be withdrawn.

The Shipman patent 3,838,680 discloses a combination  
35 heating and serving assembly having a drainage outlet or

spigot 32 by which the liquid contents of the container may be drawn off from time to time.

One of the problems with outdoor cookers is the handling of very large pots that contain a high volume of cooking fluid such as vegetable oil. It is desirable that such an outdoor cooking apparatus have good stability to support the very heavy and often tall pot during cooking, and during placement of or removal of the pot, liner or both from the burner. Further, the cooking fluid is desirably reused for certain cooking fluids such as vegetable oils. One solution is to drain the pot, yet also provide for drainage without removal from the burner. However, the burner must enable such drainage and still provide a safe, stable cooking platform for very large capacity cooking pots.

#### BRIEF SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The present invention includes a burner frame having a base for engaging an underlying support surface, the burner having a nozzle for generating a high intensity flame for use in cooking, and a supply hose for supplying propane to the burner. The burner frame has a support surface for cradling a pot.

A pot is provided that includes a flat bottom portion and cylindrically-shaped continuous side walls, the pot having a generally cylindrically-shaped interior for receiving a basket. The basket or liner removably fits the pot interior. The basket can include a base that registers against the bottom of the pot and a vertically extending portion adjacent to the pot wall that connects to a bail.

The burner frame includes a ring that is supported above the bottom of the pot on the exterior of the pot for engaging the sidewall of the pot should the pot be tipped.

The upper ring is supported by a plurality of generally "L" shaped struts that extend from the upper ring downwardly along a generally vertical path and then

horizontally to cradle the bottom of the pot.

The upper ring is specially configured as will be described more fully hereinafter to enable drainage of the pot and without removal from the burner.

5 BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE SEVERAL VIEW OF THE DRAWINGS

For a further understanding of the nature, objects, and advantages of the present invention, reference should be had to the following detailed description, read in conjunction with the following drawings, wherein like  
10 reference numerals denote like elements and wherein:

Figure 1 is a perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 2 is a partial perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present  
15 invention illustrating the basket, steam plate, and bail;

Figure 3 is a partial perspective of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating the basket portion thereof;

Figure 4 is a fragmentary perspective view of the  
20 preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating the burner portion thereof;

Figure 5 is a fragmentary sectional elevation view of the burner of Figure 4;

Figure 6 is a fragmentary sectional elevation view of  
25 the burner of Figure 4;

Figure 7 is a sectional elevation view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating the burner, pot, and basket portions thereof during steaming;

30 Figure 8 is a sectional elevation view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating the burner, pot, and basket portions thereof during boiling;

Figure 9 is a perspective view of the preferred  
35 embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention showing

an alternate burner construction;

Figure 10 is a top view of the burner of Figure 9;

Figure 11 is a sectional view taken along lines 11-11 of Figure 10;

5 Figure 12 is a perspective view of an alternate embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 13 is a sectional view taken along lines 13-13 of Figure 12;

10 Figure 14 is a sectional view taken along lines 14-14 of Figure 12;

Figure 15 is an exploded perspective view of a third embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 16 is a perspective view of the third embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

15 Figure 17 is a partial perspective view of the third embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 18 is another partial perspective view of the preferred embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

20 Figure 19 is a partial sectional elevation view of the third embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 20 is a partial perspective view of the third embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

25 Figure 21 is a perspective view of a fourth embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 22 is a partial perspective view of the fourth embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

30 Figure 23 is a partial perspective view of the fourth embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating the burner portion thereof;

Figure 24 is a fragmentary view of the fourth embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating a portion of the burner and a portion of the pot illustrating its valved drain line;

35 Figure 25 is a partial perspective view of the fourth



embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention;

Figure 26 is a perspective view of a fifth embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention; and

Figure 27 is a partial perspective view of the fifth  
5 embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention illustrating the burner portion thereof..

#### DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE INVENTION

The present invention provides an outdoor cooking apparatus designated generally by the numeral 10 in Figure  
10 1. The apparatus 10 includes a burner 11, pot 12, supply valve 13, a commercially available flexible hose for supplying propane or like fuel for firing the burner 11, and a basket 14 (see Figures 2-3) that can be lowered into the interior 15 of pot 12. In Figures 4-8, burner 11 includes  
15 a lower ring 16 and an upper ring 17. Burner 11 has a nozzle or jet surrounded by cylindrically-shaped wind guard 22.

The rings 16, 17 are connected with a plurality of struts 18. Each strut 18 includes radially extending,  
20 inclined lower strut section 19, upper strut section 20, and vertical center strut section 21. Each of the lower strut sections 19 is linear in shape, and inclined to form a connection between the lower or base ring 16 and the bottom of central strut section 21 (see Figure 6).

25 Upper strut sections 20 are generally "ell" shaped having a lower end portion 23 that forms a connection with the upper end of central strut section 21 and an upper end 24 that forms a connection with upper ring 17.

The "ell" shaped upper strut sections 20 include upper  
30 linear section 24, lower linear section 23, and bend sections 25, 26. This configuration provides both a base for holding the bottom surface 27 of pot 12 and a vertically extending portion that envelopes the lower end of pot sidewall 28.

35 In a preferred embodiment, the ring 17 can be

positioned, for example, about 2-8 inches above the bottom surface 27 of pot 12. Further, the upper ring 17 has an inside diameter indicated as 29 in Figure 7 that closely approaches the outside diameter 30 of pot 12. A clearance of  
5 about  $\frac{1}{2}$  -  $1\frac{1}{2}$  inches is provided in between the inside of ring 17 and the outside of pot wall 28 during use.

In Figures 1-3, basket 14 includes a wire basket frame base 31 that can be, for example, in the form of a plurality of connected (e.g., welded) wire members arranged in a cross  
10 (see Figure 3).

In Figures 2-3, basket 14 includes a base comprised of a pair of linear intersecting members 32, 33, a pair of vertical members 34, 35 and a bail 36. The base can have feet for spacing it from the bottom 27 surface of pot 12.  
15 Each vertical member 34, 35 has a hook 37, 38 respectively for connecting to the lower ends 39, 40 of bail 36, as shown in Figure 2. Bail 36 can be trapezoidal in shape, having handle portion 51, sides 52, 53 and cross beam 54. The enlarged handle 51 enables a user to grip with both hands.

20 Steamer plate 41 can optionally be placed upon basket 14 if food items are to be steamed. Plate 41 has a generally circular shape, providing peripheral edge 42 and central opening 43. Plate 41 is preferably perforated providing an array of openings therethrough that enable  
25 steam to access all surfaces of a food item that is placed on the upper surface 45 of plate 41. Drippings from food items can flow through the openings as well.

Support 46 extends upwardly from base 31 of basket 14. Support 46 has a dual function of holding steamer plate 41  
30 as shown in Figures 2 and 7 and of supporting a food item such as chicken, turkey or other selected item as shown in Figure 8.

A pair of laterally extending posts 47, 48 support the peripheral edge 42 of steamer plate 41 when the steamer  
35 plate is assembled to the basket 14. Central opening 43 of

steamer plate 41 rests upon support 46 when the steamer plate is put in an operational position. The steamer plate is thus supported at its periphery with posts 47, 48 and at its center with support 46. Steamer plate 41 has peripheral  
5 slots at 49, 50 that fit vertical members 34, 35 respectively.

The apparatus of the present invention thus provides a dual function cooking apparatus that enables a user to either steam food products such as crabs, lobsters, clams  
10 and the like, or boil food items such as fish, shellfish, or poultry items.

Figures 9-11 show an alternate embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention designated generally by the numeral 55 in Figures 12 and 17-18.

15 Outdoor cooking apparatus 55 includes a burner for supporting pot 12. Burner 55 (Figures 9-11) includes upper ring 56 and a plurality of horizontal struts 57-59. Vertical struts 60-62 are connected integrally to horizontal struts 57-59 respectively. As shown in Figures 9-11, a  
20 plurality of legs 63, 67, 71 are attached to horizontal struts 57, 58, 59 respectively. Each leg 63, 67, 71 is formed of a pair of straight sections and a bend section. The leg 63 includes straight sections 64 and 66 connected by bend 65. The leg 67 includes straight sections 68, 70  
25 connected by bend 69. The leg 71 is similarly configured to legs 63 and 67.

A cylindrical flue 72 is placed at the vertical central axis 91 of burner 55 as shown in Figures 10 and 11. The cylindrical flue 72 attaches to each of the legs 63, 67,  
30 71 by welding for example. Each leg 63, 67, 71 attaches to a horizontal strut 57, 58, 62, preferably by welding. Each of the vertical struts 60, 61, 62 attaches to upper end 56 by welding, for example. A fuel supply line 73 is used to supply combustible gas such as propane or butane to nozzle  
35 75. The nozzle 75 is preferably attached to the vertical

bore 74 of cylindrical flue 72 by welding or like means known in the art.

Circular plate 76 is attached to the inner end portions of horizontal struts 57, 58, 59 as shown in Figures 9-11. This attachment of plate 76 to horizontal struts 57, 58, 59 can be by welding at welds 77 for example.

In Figure 11, the apparatus 55 of the present invention is shown in operating position wherein pot 12 occupies a position on top of the horizontal struts 57, 58, 59. A flame 78 extends upwardly from nozzle 75. The nozzle 75 can be ignited when propane, butane or like gas is transmitted to the nozzle 75 via pipe line 73 using a match, or like starter. Flame 78 strikes the bottom of plate 76 diverting flame 78 laterally to provide even distribution of heat to the bottom of pot 12. This distribution of the flame 78 outwardly and laterally away from plate 76 is indicated schematically by arrows 79 in Figure 11.

Figures 12-14 show an alternate embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention designated generally by the numeral 81 in Figures 12-14. Burner apparatus 81 includes a frame 82 comprised of a plurality of beams. Frame 82 can be of welded steel construction, for example. Frame 82 thus includes beams 83, 84 that are parallel to each other and central beam 85 that is generally perpendicular to the beams 83, 84.

At the extreme end portions of frame 82, beams 86, 87 extend between respective end portions of beams 83, 84 as shown in Figure 12. Each of these end beams 86, 87 is connected to a leg 88 or 89. As shown in Figure 13, attachments 93 (for example, welded attachments) form a connection between each leg 88, 89 and frame 82 at beams 86, 87 respectively.

In Figures 13 and 14, each leg 88, 89 is comprised of a horizontal member 90 and a pair of inclined members 91, 92.

In the embodiment of Figures 12-14, a pair of burners 94 are provided, each comprising a cylindrically shaped shroud 95, a contained burner element 96 positioned within the shroud 95 as shown in Figures 13 and 14 and grate members 98 that support shroud 95 and its contained burner element 96. A ring 97 forms an interface between frame 82 and the plurality of grate members 98. Rings 97 can be welded to the beams at the top of frame 82. In Figure 12, ring 97 on the left hand side of Figure 12 is welded to beams 83, 84, 85 and 86. The ring 95 on the right hand side of Figure 12 is welded to beams 83, 84, 85, and 87. Grate members 98 are welded to ring 97 at attachments 102. Grate members 98 are also connected at attachments 103 to shroud 95. The attachments 103 can be welded connections, for example.

Figures 15-20 show a third embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention, designated generally by the numeral 104 in Figures 15 and 16. Cooking apparatus 104 is in the form of a combination smoker/burner. This apparatus enables a smoker to be used with the burner that is shown and described with respect to the first and second embodiments of Figures 1-14. Smoker apparatus 104 provides a lower section 105, middle section 106, and upper section 107. The upper section 107 basically functions as a cover. The middle section 106 is a cooking chamber. The lower section 105 can be used to contain a bowl that has a liquid that can include seasoning. Alternatively, the sections 105, 106, 107 can be assembled as a free standing smoker separate from burner 11 wherein the bowl 119 can be filled with charcoal.

Lower section 105 is specially configured to mate with and be supported by burner 11. The lower section 105 provides a larger cylindrical side wall 109 and a smaller cylindrical side wall 113. A tapered annular wall 114 joins the larger cylindrical side wall 109 and the smaller

cylindrical side wall 113 as shown in Figure 19. A bottom panel 112 connects to the lower end of the smaller cylindrical side wall 113. When not in use upon burner 11, the smoker sections 105, 106, 107 can be supported by any means known in the art such as for example, a plurality of legs 115 or a separate base that is not a burner and that fits the contours of bottom 112, small side wall 113, tapered annular side wall 114, and/or larger cylindrical side wall 109.

10       An access door 120 can be provided in lower section 105 as can be air vent openings 116. The lower section 105 can provide a flat, annular flange 117 or other suitable mating surface for supporting middle section 106. Similarly, upper section 107 is configured to fit upon the upper edge  
15 126 of middle section 106.

      A cooking grate 118 can be supported upon one or more supports 121 provided on the interior of lower section 105. Similarly, a plurality of supports 121 can also be provided at the upper end portion of middle section 106 for  
20 supporting a cooking grate. Handles 122 can be provided on any of the sections 105, 106, 107 as desired for manipulating the various sections. The cover can be provided with usual thermometer and burner 11 can provide a jet or nozzle 125 and/or a flame diffuser 124.

25       It should be understood that the general concept of a smoker that includes multiple sections such as 105, 106, 107 is old in the art, having been sold commercially a number of years such by Brinkman and others.

      Figures 21-25 show a fourth embodiment of the apparatus of the present invention designated generally by  
30 the numeral 130. Cooking apparatus 130 includes a pot 131 having a pot side wall 132 that is generally cylindrically shaped and provided with a pair of handles 133. Pot 131 provides a generally flat, circular bottom 134 and has an  
35 interior 153 that can retain items to be cooked, cooking

fluid and a perforated basket 135 or liner that enables food items to be inserted into the pot interior 153 and removed therefrom when cooking is completed. The perforated basket enables draining of any cooking fluid while retaining the food items that are to be cooked such as for example, crabs, poultry items, seafood items and the like. The perforated basket 135 can be lifted using bail 136.

Drain outlet fitting 137 is provided in pot sidewall 132 and at a lower position that is next to pot bottom 134 as shown in Figures 21, 22 and 24-25. The drain outlet fitting 137 has an attached valve 138 that can be opened or closed by rotating valve stem 139. Such an outlet 137 and valve 138 can be welded e.g. to the pot 131 wall 132. This concept of providing a drain outlet fitting 137 with an attached valve 138 is per se known, being disclosed for example in the Durham patent 123,876; the Clayton patent 1,272,222, and the Baker patent 2350,335 each of which is hereby incorporated herein by reference. Burner 140 supports pot 131 during cooking. The burner 140 includes a lower ring 141, an upper ring 142, and a plurality of struts 148, 149, 150 that extend between the upper ring 142 and lower ring 141 as shown in Figures 21, 22 and 23. A feature of the present invention is the special burner configuration at upper ring 142 that enables fluid to be drained from pot 131 without removing pot 131 from burner 140.

Upper ring 142 has a U-shaped section 146 defined by bends 143, 144, 145. The U-shaped section 146 thus extends below upper surface 147 of upper ring 142 as shown in Figures 21, 22 and 24-25. The U-shaped section 46 provides a recess 151 that enables valve 138 to extend a radial distance beyond the outer periphery of upper ring 142 as shown in Figures 21, 22 and 24-25. The combination of drain outlet fitting 137 and valve 138 provide a flow bore 152 during use. The valve 138 can be opened for draining fluid from the pot 131. This can be helpful when cooking with

large volumes of cooking fluid such as vegetable oil that is commonly used is the cooking of poultry items such as large turkeys. After the vegetable oil that is used to cook a turkey has cooled, it can be drained easily into its  
5 original one gallon container by opening the valve 138 with a rotation of stem 139 in a counterclockwise direction. Peanut oil, for example, is commonly used for frying turkeys and is commonly sold in one gallon containers.

Each of the struts 148, 149, 150 has a plurality of  
10 sections. These sections include a lower section 154 and an upper section 155. As shown in Figure 23, the upper section 155 is generally L-shaped being attached to upper ring 142 at connection 157 (for example, a welded connection). The strut lower section 154 is an elongated, partially inclined  
15 and partially vertical member that attaches to upper section 155 at connection 156, a connection that can be welded, for example. The lower section 154 is attached to lower ring 141 at connection 158, preferably a welded connection. The upper sections 155 each provide a generally horizontal upper  
20 surface portion 159 that cradles the bottom 134 of pot 131 during use as shown in Figures 21 and 22.

A wind guard or shroud 160 can be provided to burner 140 as shown in Figures 21 and 22, surrounding these three struts 148, 159 and being attached thereto by welding, for  
25 example. Shroud 160 can provide a support bar 161 for supporting a burner element 162. The burner element 162 can be a common, commercially available cast iron burner element that is fueled by a gaseous fuel such as propane or butane.

A fifth embodiment of the apparatus of the present  
30 invention is shown in Figures 26 and 27, designated generally by the numeral 164. Cooking apparatus 164 includes a burner 165 that is configured to support a pot 131 having a generally cylindrically shaped pot side wall 132 and a generally circular, flat pot bottom 134. In Figures 26 and  
35 27, burner 165 has a plurality of struts 166, 167, 168 that



are attached to cylindrically shaped shroud 169. The upper end portion of each of the struts 166, 167, 168 support upper ring 170 which is cylindrically shaped, having cylindrical ring wall 172. Bolted connections 171 can be  
5 used to attach upper ring 170 to each of the struts 166, 167, 168. The upper ring 170 provides an upper edge 173 and lower edge 174. Recess 175 is cut out of upper ring 170, wall 172. Recess 175 is surrounded by surfaces 176, 177 and 178 as shown in Figure 27. The recess 175 enables the pot  
10 drain outlet fitting 137 and valve 138 to extend radially beyond the circumference of ring 170 as shown in Figure 26.

Each strut 166 is comprised of a plurality of sections. However, each strut 166 can be an integral structure. In Figures 26 and 27, each strut 166, 167, 168 is  
15 comprised of a vertical upper section 179 and horizontal section 180 that cradles the pot 131 during use. Vertical section 179 and horizontal section 180 are connected at bend 186. The horizontal sections 180 each providing a flat upper surface 181 upon which the pot 131 bottom 134 rests during  
20 cooking. Vertical section 182 extends between bend 187 and bend 188. Inclined section 183 of each strut 166, 167, 168 extends between bend 188 and curved foot 184. The curved foot 184 connects to inclined section 183 at bend 189. An upturned end portion 185 of each strut 166, 167, 168 can be  
25 fastened (for example bolted using bolted connection 171) to lower ring 190.

#### PARTS LIST

The following is a list of suitable parts and materials for the various elements of the preferred  
30 embodiment of the present invention.

	Part Number	Description
	10	cooking apparatus
	11	burner
	12	pot
35	13	supply valve

	14	basket
	15	interior
	16	lower ring
	17	upper ring
5	18	strut
	19	lower strut section
	20	upper strut section
	21	center strut section
	22	wind guard
10	23	lower linear section
	24	upper linear section
	25	bend
	26	bend
	27	bottom surface
15	28	pot sidewall
	29	inside diameter
	30	outside diameter
	31	base
	32	intersecting member
20	33	intersecting member
	34	vertical member
	35	vertical member
	36	bail
	37	hook
25	38	hook
	39	end
	40	end
	41	steamer plate
	42	peripheral edge
30	43	central opening
	44	openings
	45	upper surface
	46	support
	47	horizontal post
35	48	horizontal post

	49	slot
	50	slot
	51	handle portion
	52	side
5	53	side
	54	transverse beam
	55	outdoor cooking apparatus
	56	upper ring
	57	horizontal strut
10	58	horizontal strut
	59	horizontal strut
	60	vertical strut
	61	vertical strut
	62	vertical strut
15	63	leg
	64	straight section
	65	bend
	66	straight section
	67	leg
20	68	straight section
	69	bend
	70	straight section
	71	leg
	72	cylindrical flue
25	73	fuel supply line
	74	vertical bore
	75	nozzle
	76	circular plate
	77	weld
30	78	flame
	79	arrows
	80	central axis
	81	burner apparatus
	82	frame
35	83	beam

	84	beam
	85	beam
	86	beam
	87	beam
5	88	leg
	89	leg
	90	horizontal member
	91	inclined member
	92	inclined member
10	93	attachment
	94	burner
	95	shroud
	96	burner element
	97	ring
15	98	grate member
	99	horizontal section
	100	vertical section
	101	bend
	102	attachment
20	103	attachment
	104	smoker apparatus
	105	lower section
	106	middle section
	107	upper section
25	109	cylindrical sidewall
	110	open top
	112	bottom panel
	113	cylindrical sidewall
	114	tapered annular wall
30	115	leg
	116	air vent opening
	117	annular flange
	118	cooking grate
	119	bowl
35	120	door

	121	support
	122	handle
	123	thermometer
	124	flame diffuser
5	125	nozzle
	126	upper edge
	130	cooking apparatus
	131	pot
	132	pot side wall
10	133	handle
	134	bottom
	135	perforated basket
	136	bail
	137	drain outlet fitting
15	138	valve
	139	stern
	140	burner
	141	lower ring
	142	upper ring
20	143	bend
	144	bend
	145	bend
	146	U-shaped section
	147	upper surface
25	148	street
	149	strut
	150	strut
	151	recess
	152	bore
30	153	pot interior
	154	lower section
	155	upper section
	156	connection
	157	connection
35	158	connection

	159	upper surface
	160	shroud
	161	support bar
	162	burner element
5	164	cooking apparatus
	165	burner
	166	strut
	167	strut
	168	strut
10	169	shroud
	170	upper ring
	171	bolted connection
	172	ring wall
	173	upper edge
15	174	lower edge
	175	recess
	176	surface
	177	surface
	178	surface
20	179	vertical section
	180	horizontal section
	181	flat surface
	182	vertical section
	183	inclined section
25	184	curved foot
	185	upturned end portion
	186	bend
	187	bend
	188	bend
30	189	bend

The foregoing embodiments are presented by way of example only; the scope of the present invention is to be limited only by the following claims: